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Hearing Clerk  
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March 25, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to voice our opinion in opposition to the proposed hop marketing order. While there are many varied opinions in opposition, we would like to state some we think are of significance.

It is our view that the way the allotment base will be granted is unequally applied. Prior to the Representative Base Period (1997 - 2002), we grew 420 acres of hops. We presently have reduced our acreage to 320, in an effort to help reduce the oversupply and assist the struggling market. Our base would be less than what we desire and are able to grow, while other producers who chose to expand their acreage in the base period would have more. We feel we would be penalized for trying to help the hop market.

The same reason holds for the second Representative Base Period. If the six most recent years are used, those who continued to expand in a struggling market, and contributed to the problem, will benefit the most. There is no fair way to implement this marketing order.

We believe that only a worldwide marketing order would work. If U.S. growers are restricted by volume controls, this will only signal to international competitors that they may expand their acreage.

Historically, U.S. hop marketing orders have not worked. We feel that the new proposal is no different.

Thank you for reviewing our letter; we urge you to deny the proposed hop marketing order.

Respectfully,

Charles R. Stauffer  
President